Lime Down
Solar Park

Consultation Report Appendices

Appendix C-7: Non-Statutory Consultation

September 2025

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List of Contents

1 Stage One Consultation Summary Report

Lime Down
Solar Park

Consultation Summary Report

October 2024

Island GREEN POWER

Introduction

This Consultation Summary Report provides an overview of the feedback we received during our Stage One consultation for Lime Down Solar Park. Our Stage One consultation ran for six weeks, from 14 March 2024 and 26 April 2024.

This document includes a summary of the comments received and how we are using this feedback to inform the project design process moving forward.

About Lime Down Solar Park

Lime Down Solar Park is a new utility-scale solar park and battery energy storage project proposed to be built on land in North Wiltshire. The project would comprise the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and an on-site battery energy storage facility, plus associated development to connect the project into the national grid at Melksham Substation so the electricity it generates can be made available to homes and businesses across the UK.

Our team is continuing to develop the proposals for Lime Down Solar Park ahead of further consultation next year. You can view the latest map of our proposals on page 22 and our project webpage: **www.limedownsolar.co.uk**.

The map was published in July alongside our Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report. You can read more about this on Page 20.

About us

Established in 2013, Island Green Power is a leading developer of renewable energy projects. We specialise in the development of utility-scale solar projects and battery energy storage systems; overseeing the entire development process from start to finish, including sourcing land, securing grid connections and obtaining planning consents.

We are committed to help the UK decarbonise and meet net zero goals. Our mission is to help the UK increase its solar energy generation, making more renewable energy possible while drastically reducing carbon emissions.

Over the last decade we have successfully delivered over 34 projects worldwide totalling more than one gigawatt of clean, renewable energy assets. This includes 17 projects in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

We are equally committed to responsible land use, developing projects that work in harmony with local communities and the environment, while delivering bespoke benefits and enhancements best suited to the surroundings.

Our Stage One non-statutory consultation

Thank you to all those who participated in our consultation by attending events, submitting feedback and asking questions.

During our consultation we:

- Engaged with parish, district and county councillors across the area.
- Distributed our community consultation leaflet to over 11,400 addresses.
- Hosted two online webinars, which were attended by over 100 people.
- Advertised our Stage One consultation, events and webinars in local and regional newspapers.
- Invited feedback through an online and paper feedback form.
- Received feedback and responded to enquiries through our range of communications channels (email, Freephone and Freepost).
- Held six in-person community consultation events in Sherston, Hullavington, Grittleton, Upper Seagry, Corsham and Shaw, where we spoke with over 960 attendees.

Our Stage One consultation provided an opportunity for people to view and comment on our early-stage proposals. We are pleased to have received a significant volume of feedback and would like to thank everyone who engaged in our consultation.

Your comments have helped to improve our understanding of the local area and the aspects of Lime Down Solar Park that you consider important for us to prioritise as we develop our proposals.

During our consultation we received:

752 paper and online feedback forms;

539 emails;

35 letters; and

334 people registered to receive project updates.

What you told us

Our focus is on providing accurate and honest information to build an understanding of how Lime Down Solar Park can generate low carbon energy, while minimising impacts on the local environment and surrounding communities.

About you

Community input is key to the project development process, and the majority (79%) of feedback we received during Stage One came from individuals who identified themselves as local residents.

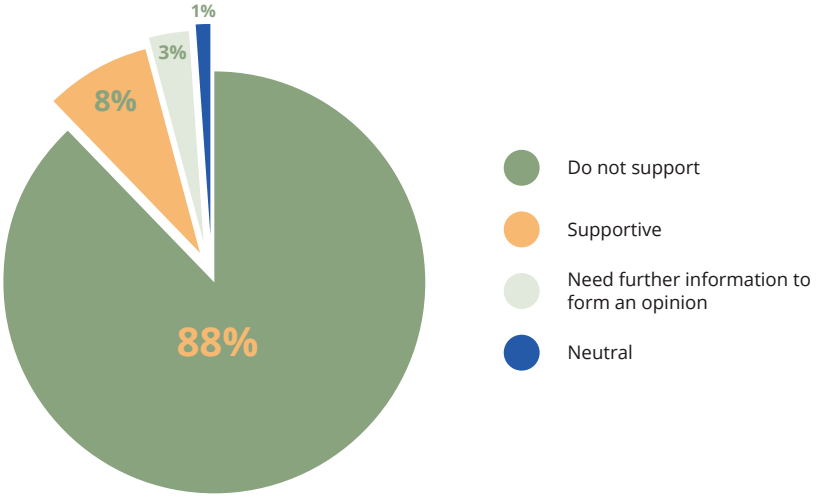
In our feedback form, we also asked respondents their age to help gauge the average demographic makeup of participants. A few respondents also voluntarily disclosed their age to us in their feedback submitted by email and Freepost. Most respondents (60%) were 55 years old or above, and 40% of respondents were between 18 years old and 54 years old.

General

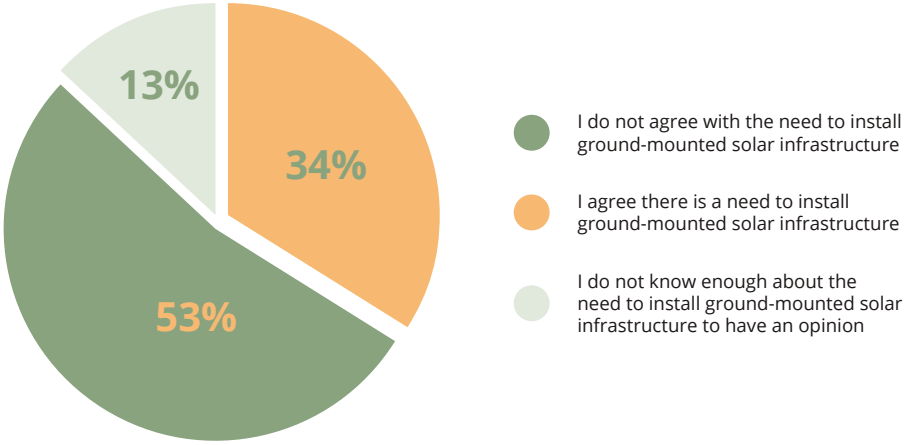
We also aimed to understand how members of the local community felt about solar energy in general, as well as about our early-stage proposals for Lime Down Solar Park. As shown in the charts on page 5, most respondents (53%) did not agree with the need to install ground-mounted solar infrastructure, and 88% did not support our proposals at this initial stage in the development process.

This feedback is important as we need to understand the basis for these concerns and look at how they can be addressed as the project develops further. In the following pages we summarise the feedback received and how we are working to refine our plans for Lime Down Solar Park, including on environmental topics and our approach to consultation and engagement.

What is your view of our proposals for Lime Down Solar Park at this early stage in the development process?



As a principle do you agree there is a need to install ground-mounted solar infrastructure in the UK?

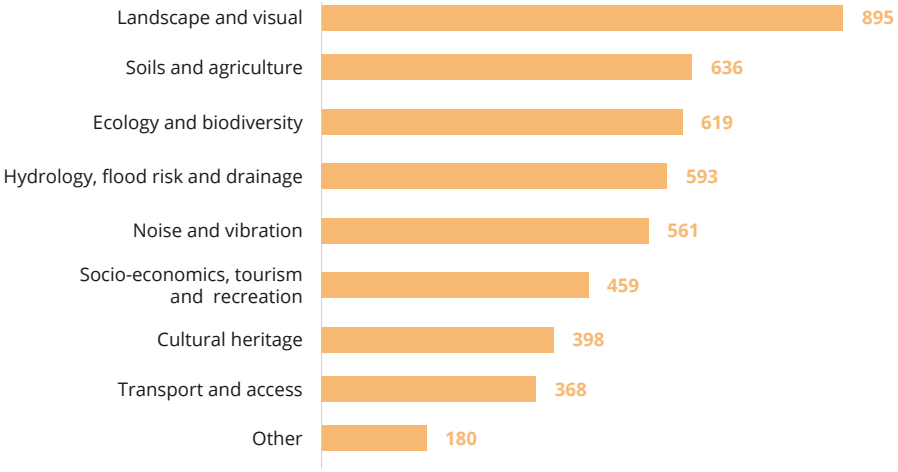


Environmental considerations

In our feedback form, we asked which aspects of the proposals mattered to you most. We provided respondents the option to 'tick' from a list of key environmental themes which themes were most important to you, along with a text box for you to add further details. Respondents were also presented with an 'Other' box so they could speak to any other themes or areas of importance.

We also accounted for instances where respondents specified particular themes of importance in feedback submitted via emails and Freepost.

Which aspects of the project are most important to you?



We are currently preparing a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). This report will include chapters on the relevant environmental topics to explain the assessments being undertaken, the potential effects of the project, and appropriate mitigation measures being explored. Your feedback to Stage One is being considered by the team undertaking this work.

The PEIR will be published as part of the upcoming Stage Two statutory consultation, currently set to take place early next year.

This table summarises the key themes raised through all the Stage One feedback received, and how the project team is considering these.

Landscape and visual

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
A common theme within the comments received was the proposed size of Lime Down Solar Park. Concerns raised that this could result in the loss of visual amenity of countryside views, which are valued by the community and visitors. Respondents expressed concern for project impacting the setting of the Cotswold National Landscape. Respondents raised concerns about how the sites will impact the views and overall character of the local landscape. We noted particular concern for the proximity to the AONB. We also noted particular concern for the visual impact of the proposed battery storage site on the villages of Whitley and Shaw, in particular at Top Lane.	We are undertaking a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which will include a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). The LVIA will specifically assess the impacts on the Cotswold National Landscape as well as on the character of the landscape and visual amenity of identified receptors within the Study Area. The viewpoints from which the landscape and visual impacts will be assessed and developed in consultation with landscape officers at the local planning authority and with the Cotswold National Landscape Board. A Residential Visual Amenity Assessment will also be undertaken to assess views from neighbouring properties where significant residual effects are identified. Through the course of the iterative design process the team will continue to look for opportunities to reduce and mitigate the visual impact of the project. The Outline Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plan (LEMP) that will be presented in the Development Consent Order Application will seek to increase the green infrastructure within the site and where possible, link up ecological networks. This includes: • The creation of new native woodland blocks and belts; • Planting new native hedgerows; • Reinforcing existing boundary hedgerows; • New native tree planting; • New areas of wildflower and grassland for ecological mitigation.

Soils and agriculture

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
Respondents stated concern regarding the loss of productive agricultural land, and suggested that farmland is not appropriate for large-scale solar farms. Respondents expressed concerns regarding the project's impact on the UK's food security. Respondents expressed concern for the project to negatively affect soils.	Government policy is to deploy large-scale ground-mounted solar PV generation across the UK, looking for development mainly on brownfield, industrial, and low and medium grade agricultural land. The quality of agricultural land used for Lime Down Solar Park is being established through detailed soil and Agricultural Land Classification surveys, which have been discussed in regular consultations with Natural England. These surveys will establish the area and quality of agricultural land which will be reported in the PEIR and ES, and the results are being used in the design of the scheme to avoid the best and most versatile land where possible. It is estimated that ground-mounted solar used just 0.1% of UK land in 2022; and that to meet the Government's net zero target, 90GW of solar will be needed by 2050, which would mean solar farms would account for approximately 0.6% of UK land. As Energy Secretary Ed Miliband has said: *"The biggest threat to nature and food security and to our rural communities is not solar panels or onshore wind: it is the climate crisis, which threatens our best farmland, food production and the livelihoods of farmers."* [1] Construction of Lime Down Solar Park will be carried out in accordance with a number of management plans which will be presented in the Development Consent Order Application, including an outline soil resource management plan which will address the avoidance of soil compaction and other negative impacts on soil quality.

[1] *Hansard. (2024) Clean Energy Superpower Mission. Volume 752: debated on Thursday 18 July 2024, House of Commons. Available at:* [redacted]

Ecology and biodiversity

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
Respondents expressed concern that the proposals could negatively impact existing local ecology and diverse ecosystems. Local habitats highlighted as being particularly sensitive included ancient woodlands (such as Bradfield Wood), hedgerows and watercourses. Respondents wanted to be provided with more information on how these would be protected. A range of protected and conservation priority species in the area were noted as being of concern. In particular, respondents emphasised the importance of the area for bats, farmland birds, owls, small mammals, amphibians, pollinating invertebrates and rare plants. Your comments showed us you are particularly concerned about how security fencing could impact the movement of local wildlife. Some respondents expressed scepticism for the project's ability to deliver an increase in biodiversity, while other respondents recognised the potential benefits for biodiversity and expressed support for the Biodiversity Net Gain that would be delivered with the project.	We will consider the habitats and species you have told us about, alongside the environmental surveys we are doing, as part of our environmental impact assessment, details of which will be within the Ecology and Biodiversity Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) chapter. The assessment will specifically consider the potential impacts of the project on woodlands, hedgerows, watercourses, bats, birds and other local wildlife. The findings of the surveys and assessments will be consulted on with local authorities, as well as statutory environmental and nature conservation bodies such as the Environment Agency and Natural England. The PEIR assessment and consultation process will also inform any mitigation and enhancement measures and will be made publicly available for you to comment on as part of our stage two consultation. Protective buffers from sensitive habitats such as woodlands, hedgerows, watercourses and ponds will be implemented. Buffer zones will be targeted for appropriate habitat creation measures, designed to benefit target wildlife as well as strengthening connective links between existing habitats. While formal targets for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) do not yet apply to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) such as Lime Down Solar Park, we anticipate the project will deliver the minimum target of 10% BNG, which is expected to become a legal requirement for NSIPs from November 2025.

Hydrology, flood risk and drainage

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
Respondents expressed concerns regarding the location of the development being partially within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Also, there was concern of an increase in perceived flood risk due to water runoff from solar panels and battery storage. Respondents stated the area is already prone to flooding during periods of heavy rain, we noted particular concern for the project's impact on the villages of Whitley, Shaw, Gastard, Seagry, Rodbourne, Norton and Hullavington.	As a response to this feedback and consultation with bodies including the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flooding Authority and Wiltshire Council, in producing the Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage chapter of the PEIR that we will consult on at Stage Two, we are studying all water environment receptors within the project boundary as defined in the PEIR and within a 250m radius of the boundary. This includes, but is not limited to, the River Avon and Gauze, Pudding and Hardenhuish Brooks as well as the unnamed ordinary watercourses. As we pursue our assessments, it is likely that any potential areas at high risk of flooding will be avoided and, where this is not practicable, other measures to reduce risk would be implemented (e.g. local raising of panels and sensitive equipment). Our focus is on ensuring Lime Down Solar Park is well-designed to respond sensitively to the local environment. We have undertaken a review of the available published flood risk data, including the Environment Agency's underlying hydraulic models and will continue to assess this as the design develops further. We are engaging with the Environment Agency to ensure a safe and appropriate layout for Lime Down Solar Park. Well-designed solar projects have a negligible impact on flood risk. Mitigation will be identified to ensure there is no increase to flood risk outside the site boundaries. Feedback we received from local communities about flood risk during stage one has been very helpful and we continue to seek feedback on our proposals.

Noise and vibration

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
Respondents raised concerns about noise pollution and vibration during the construction phase of the project, both from construction traffic and construction activity at the site. Respondents raised concerns about noise pollution and vibration during the operation of the project. Particular concern was raised for properties nearby the proposed battery storage sites.	As a response, in producing the Noise and Vibration Chapter of the PEIR that we will consult on at Stage Two, we are assessing the potential impacts of construction activity (including traffic) at surrounding properties and habitats. Based upon this assessment, alternative vehicle routing or construction timetabling may be used to mitigate any identified impacts. This is in addition to management of best practice techniques, use of quieter equipment and the provision of hoarding which may also be used to mitigate construction impacts. A noise survey of the baseline noise conditions has been undertaken which will also be used to quantify any potential changes to the current noise level caused by the project. As a response, in producing the Noise and Vibration Chapter of the PEIR that we will consult on at Stage Two, we are considering potential noise impacts, when designing the site layout, to reduce the potential for noise impacts in the first instance. Beyond this, we are considering the provision of bunding or acoustic barriers to further reduce any potential noise impacts, as well as intrinsic acoustic attenuation for proposed equipment. This aims to reduce any potential noise impacts on surrounding properties, but also local wildlife and their habitats.

Socio-economics, tourism and recreation

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
Respondents commented on the potential job creation from Lime Down Solar Park, and potential impacts on tenant farmers and rural businesses such as studs. Residents raised concerns over the potential impact on tourism and recreation due to loss of visual amenity, and a potential loss of access to or use of recreational routes and for footpath users, cyclist, and equestrian users, such as the Wiltshire Cycleway, Fosse Way, Palladian Way, and Public Rights of Way (PRoW).	As a response, in producing the Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation chapter of the PEIR that we will consult on at Stage Two, we are considering how our project may contribute to increased access to employment activities, increased workplace population and increased (direct and indirect) economic activity. For example, we are considering ways to promote local employment and procurement to support industry in the local area, such as transferrable skills training. We also want to support tenant farmers within the proposed project area who may be impacted by the project. We are collaborating with landowners to identify suitable alternative sites for their farming practices. Additionally, agricultural management contracts, such as wildflower management, are being considered to support their transition. Impacts on existing rural, agricultural and tourism industries will be considered in the PEIR. This will include stud farms and holiday rental accommodation that directly neighbour the project. In refining the project design, visibility of the project from PRoWs, tourism attractions and recreational facilities will be assessed to consider the visual and amenity impacts on their use and desirability. Any temporary closures or diversions to PRoWs as a result of construction activities will be controlled and minimised to reduce impacts on users through the Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan presented in the Development Consent Order Application. Landscaping proposals will support the design of the project to limit outward views of the sites to recreational and tourism destinations, including those in the Cotswolds National Landscape.

Cultural heritage

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
Respondents highlighted the importance of local heritage and the need to undertake sufficient assessment works and consultation with the appropriate heritage bodies. Respondents expressed concerns about potential impacts to the historic landscape, and the characters of villages and communities. Respondents mentioned various local heritage sites including Listed Buildings (such as Fosse Lodge, Bradfield Manor and Norton Manor) and heritage assets in proximity to the two proposed BESS options being explored. Respondents stated that the area is rich in archaeology. Particular concern was noted about proximity to roman roads (including the Fosse Way and Silchester to Bath roman road to the north of the Whitley Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) site). Your feedback helped us to understand better the sources of local heritage in the community, such as the evolution of historical villages and settlements and their relationship to the various communication links such as Roman roads.	The Cultural Heritage PEIR Chapter will set out the preliminary results of our assessment of the Historic Environment, including all the Designated and Non-Designated Assets we have identified within a minimum 2km (and 1km, respectively) radius. An assessment will be undertaken to identify any potential impacts to heritage assets, including Listed Buildings, as part of the EIA. Mitigation options will be explored with the aim of reducing impacts to heritage assets. We are committed to thorough consultation with the appropriate heritage bodies to ensure a robust impact assessment is produced for cultural heritage. Details of the consultation undertaken to date will also be provided within the PEIR. Assessment works undertaken and detailed in the Cultural Heritage chapter of the PEIR have looked to identify areas that can be used for BNG instead of solar-related infrastructure to minimise or remove impacts to identified heritage assets and archaeological sites. These fields identified for BNG, rather than solar-related infrastructure, will be included within the Cultural Heritage chapter of the PEIR. Desk-based assessments, supported by archaeological evaluation works, will be produced that identify the potential for archaeological remains within the site area. We will identify mitigation strategies with the aim of preserving or recording buried archaeological features in line with national and local guidance. The full results of our assessments will be provided as part of the Cultural Heritage section of the Environmental Statement. As we develop our proposals, we continue to consider heritage assets, including those raised through feedback.

Transport and access

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
Respondents have raised concerns regarding construction traffic and HGVs increasing congestion on roads which were noted as being currently unsuitable and dangerous. Concern was raised about the prevalence of narrow roads in the local area and an associated perceived risk of road traffic accidents. Specific roads mentioned include the A429, B3352, A350 and roads surrounding Grittleton in particular. Respondents have concerns regarding the damage that construction traffic will cause the local area, including damage to roads of particular import, such as the Fosse Way and the roads of a rural nature, as well concern for the noise and air pollution. Additionally, respondents suggested the potential improvements that could be made to existing Public Rights of Way, such as SHER16 and Bridleway B1, with requests for these to connect onto new bridleways around the Site.	An outline Construction Traffic Management (oCTMP) will support the submission of the DCO. This will provide a framework for the management of construction vehicle movements, to ensure that the effects of the construction phase are controlled and mitigated. Where HGVs are required for the construction phase of the project, transport routes will seek to avoid residential areas where possible. We will ensure any damage caused by construction vehicles to the highway network will be repaired through a road condition survey. Other measures within the oCTMP will include restricting HGV movements to avoid network peak hours (08:00-09:00 and 17:00-18:00) and the use of vehicle planning management systems to avoid known constraints on the road network. Environmental Statement chapters for air quality and noise will be prepared that will include separate mitigation measures to ensure that the local environment and settlements are protected. We are also investigating potential improvements to Public Rights of Way. An Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan (oPRoWMP) will be prepared to support the DCO.

Other themes and areas of importance

Glint and glare

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
Respondents expressed concern for potential glint and glare from solar panels towards surrounding residential dwellings and roads. In particular, respondents are concerned about glare from the panels causing safety issues on roads and decreasing amenity for surrounding residences.	The Glint and Glare Chapter of the PEIR we will be consulting on at Stage Two considers potential impacts to roads and residential dwellings within a 1km radius of potential panel areas. Impacts will be designated for all assessed dwellings within the Technical Appendix (Glint and Glare Assessment), and mitigation measures will address significant effects where they are predicted. Where needed, mitigation strategies may include changes to the configuration of the site, or installing screening such as new plantings or opaque fencing.

Light pollution

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
Respondents express concern regarding light pollution. In particular, respondents were concerned about lighting being triggered frequently by both people and wildlife. One respondent is concerned that motion sensor / emergency lighting would cause significant and unreasonable light pollution as the area is located within a dark sky and panoramic area. Respondents expressed scepticism about mitigating light pollution.	The potential effects of light pollution will be considered within Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) which will be consulted on during our Stage Two consultation. As part of the environmental impact assessment process reported in the PEIR and subsequent Environmental Statement, opportunities to reduce and mitigate effects from light pollution will be identified and considered. A lighting strategy for the operation and maintenance phase will be set out in the Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan presented in the Development Consent Order Application.

Battery safety

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
Respondents expressed particular concern for the fire risk of the battery storage, including the potential for this to result in contamination of nearby watercourses in the event of a fire.	In producing the outline Battery Fire Safety Management Plan and the PEIR Chapter on Air Quality, we will be assessing the potential impacts of a BESS fire during the operational phase, and identify what measures are required to avoid and reduce the risk of a fire, as well as how to effectively manage a fire should this occur. We will conduct thorough safety assessments in collaboration with fire service authorities and will submit a comprehensive battery safety management plan to the Planning Inspectorate as part of our application for development consent. We are committed to delivering a safe and responsible solution that will meet or exceed latest regulatory and compliance standards, including the National Fire Chief Council Fire Safety Guidelines. BESSs under consideration incorporate several safety features to prevent issues such as overheating or short-circuiting. These include thermal management systems, built-in sensors, and monitoring software to detect and address potential problems early.

Community impact

Your comments	How we're listening and what happens next
Respondents raised concerns over the project's impacts on the local community – in their sense of rural identity, community cohesion, and livelihoods. This includes concerns raised over the potential for physical and mental health and wellbeing impacts resulting from losses of amenity, access to nature, and impact on daily lives.	We will assess the impacts upon physical and mental health and wellbeing through the Human Health chapter of the PEIR. This includes determining the impact on rural identity and community cohesion and mitigating this through directly engaging with local communities. The PEIR will identify effects on physical health from the project such as pollution and noise impacts. It will set out how to mitigate mental health impacts such as through the retention of access to recreational space, providing targeted information to help alleviate anxieties, and identifying options for the provision of community benefits.

Community Benefits

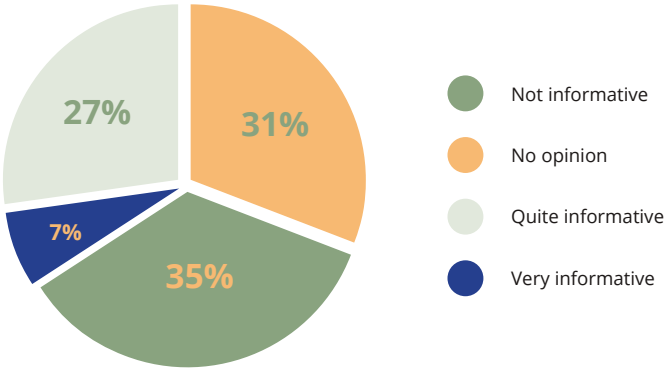
Lime Down Solar Park is aiming to provide meaningful community benefits alongside its clean electricity production. One area of focus is energy support, where the project is considering ways to assist local households. This could include potential energy discounts or subsidies to help alleviate costs, particularly for vulnerable residents. Additionally, we are exploring opportunities to support local education, potentially partnering with schools and colleges to promote STEM subjects, renewable energy, and environmental sustainability. This could include educational programs, workshops, or site visits to inspire interest in green technologies.

In addition to energy and education, Lime Down Solar Park is looking into ways to contribute to community welfare more broadly, such as investing in local infrastructure, environmental enhancements, biodiversity net gain measures beyond project boundaries, and improved local public amenities. The project is also considering backing initiatives that promote environmental awareness and local wellbeing. Through these efforts, Lime Down Solar Park aims to leave a positive impact, ensuring that the local community benefits from the project in various ways.

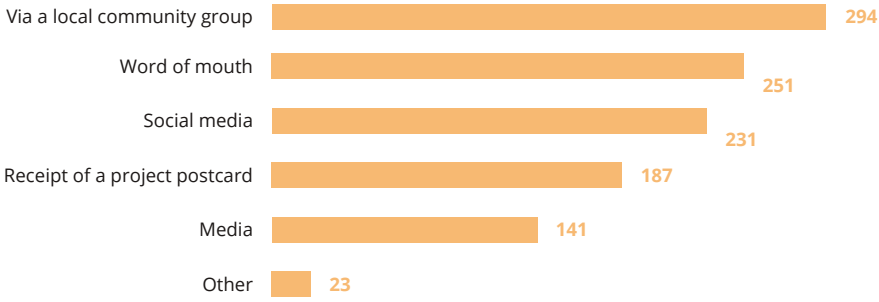
Our consultation and engagement approach

During our Stage One consultation we also asked for feedback on our consultation and engagement approach. This is being considered as we prepare for our upcoming Stage Two consultation.

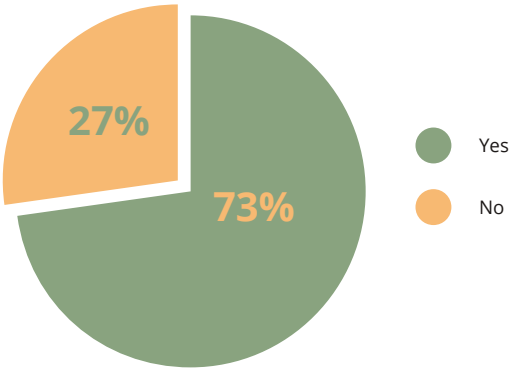
How informative did you find the information events we held (in-person / online) and / or our consultation materials we produced (print / digitial)?



How did you find out about this consultation?



Have you attended a project information event (in-person/online) and / or visited our website to view information about Lime Down Solar Park?



We are grateful for the feedback you provided on this topic, which we will use to make our next consultation even better.

Some of your suggestions included:

- Providing at least two weeks notice for our information events;
- Offering more information events;
- Scheduling events at different points, e.g. after at least a full week of consultation, in the evening or on a Saturday;
- Making our consultation materials more accessible to those without internet access; and
- Publicising our consultation more widely.

We would like to acknowledge the feedback regarding the level of detail published as part of our non-statutory Stage One consultation. This is because it was intended as an opportunity for the community to learn about and comment on an early iteration of Lime Down Solar Park at an early stage of the development process, and for us to analyse this feedback as we work to refine our proposals.

The Stage Two Statutory Consultation, which we expect to take place in early 2025, will include more information on our proposals as we consult on a more detailed project design.

Before Stage Two, we will publish a document known as the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) as required by the Planning Act (2008). The contents of the SoCC will be informed by consultation on a draft version with Wiltshire Council. The SoCC will set out our consultation methods, including how we intend to publicise the statutory consultation, who we are consulting and where we'll be holding events.

Where we are now

We submitted our Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate on Tuesday 16 July 2024, and are now preparing the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). We aim to hold our statutory consultation in early 2025, to gather your views on the PIER and accompanying plans.

The EIA Scoping Report provides an overview of our project and the environmental baseline surveys that we intend to undertake, describes how we will assess any likely significant environmental effects, and sets out the proposed scope and content of the EIA and Environmental Statement. You can read it on the PINS webpage for the project **linked here**.

The scope of the EIA is informed by technical expertise and by engagement with stakeholders to ensure that the methodologies for environmental assessments are sufficient to accurately identify and understand the environmental impacts of Lime Down Solar Park.

Over the course of the initial consultation we held earlier this year, people raised concerns about the potential impact of the development on treasured views and walks, wildlife, and local ecology. We have listened to these concerns and worked in consultation with landowners to consider how to enhance protection of those features people identified as being important.

This has resulted in an additional 44 hectares of land being made available for the project design, presenting the opportunity for us to use a similar area of land to enhance buffer zones and move solar infrastructure away from sensitive areas and receptors such as the Cotswold National Landscape (formerly known as the Cotswold AONB), nearby heritage assets including the Fosse Way, landscape features, and Public Rights of Way, as well as residential properties.

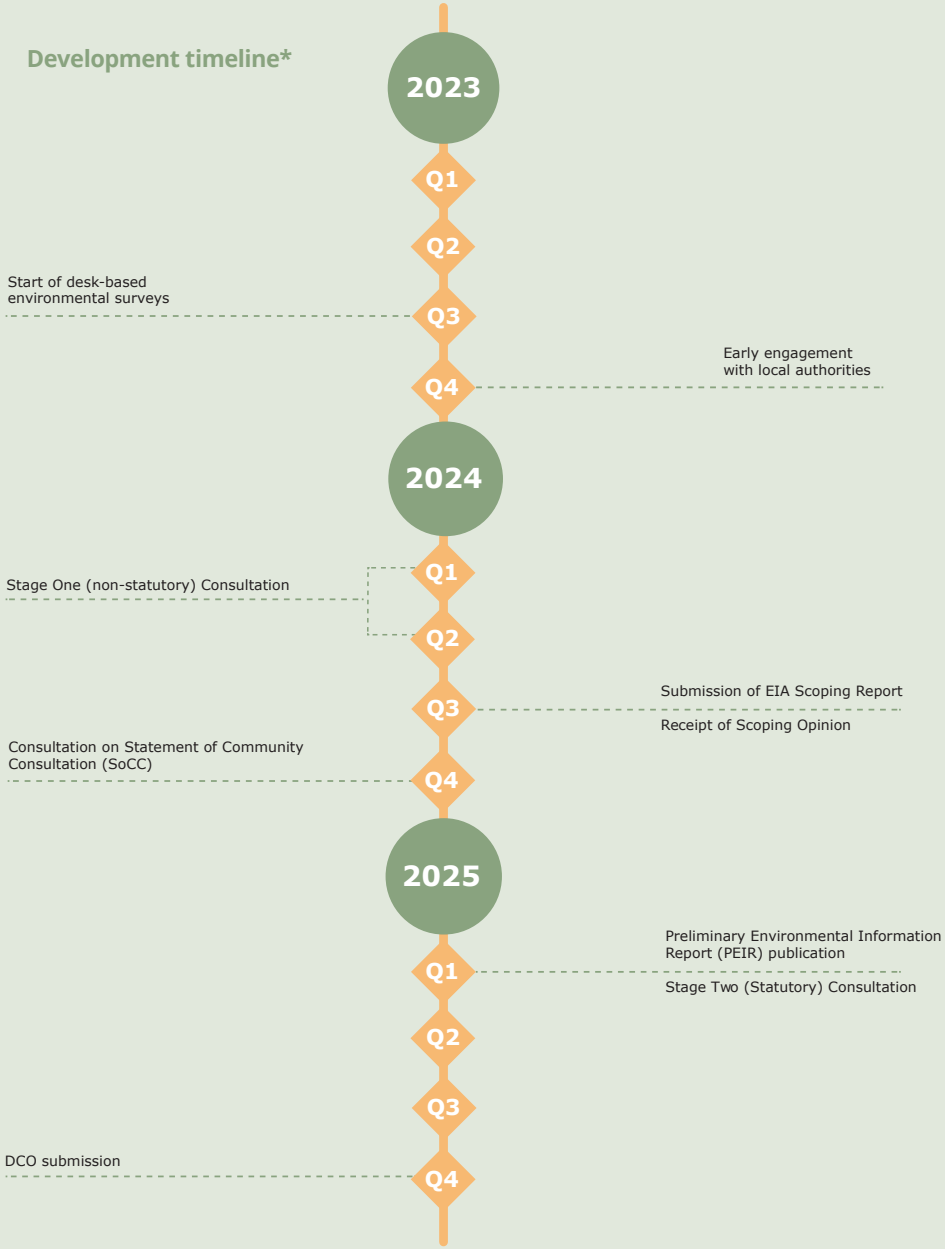
Details of the additional land included are set out in the EIA Scoping Report and an updated map is available on page 22 and our website **www.limedownsolar.co.uk**.

PINS responded to the Scoping Report by issuing the Scoping Opinion, which sets out comments on our proposed approach to the EIA and the topics we need to take forward for assessment and should be presented in the ES. On 22 August 2024, PINS published the Scoping Opinion on their website, which you can read by **clicking here**.

The Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) we consult on at Stage Two will build on the feedback received to the Stage One non-statutory consultation and the feedback in the Scoping Opinion. This document will include chapters on the themes set out on page 6 and will detail the initial findings of the EIA and identify measures we are proposing to reduce, enhance and improve the effects our proposed development may have on the environment.

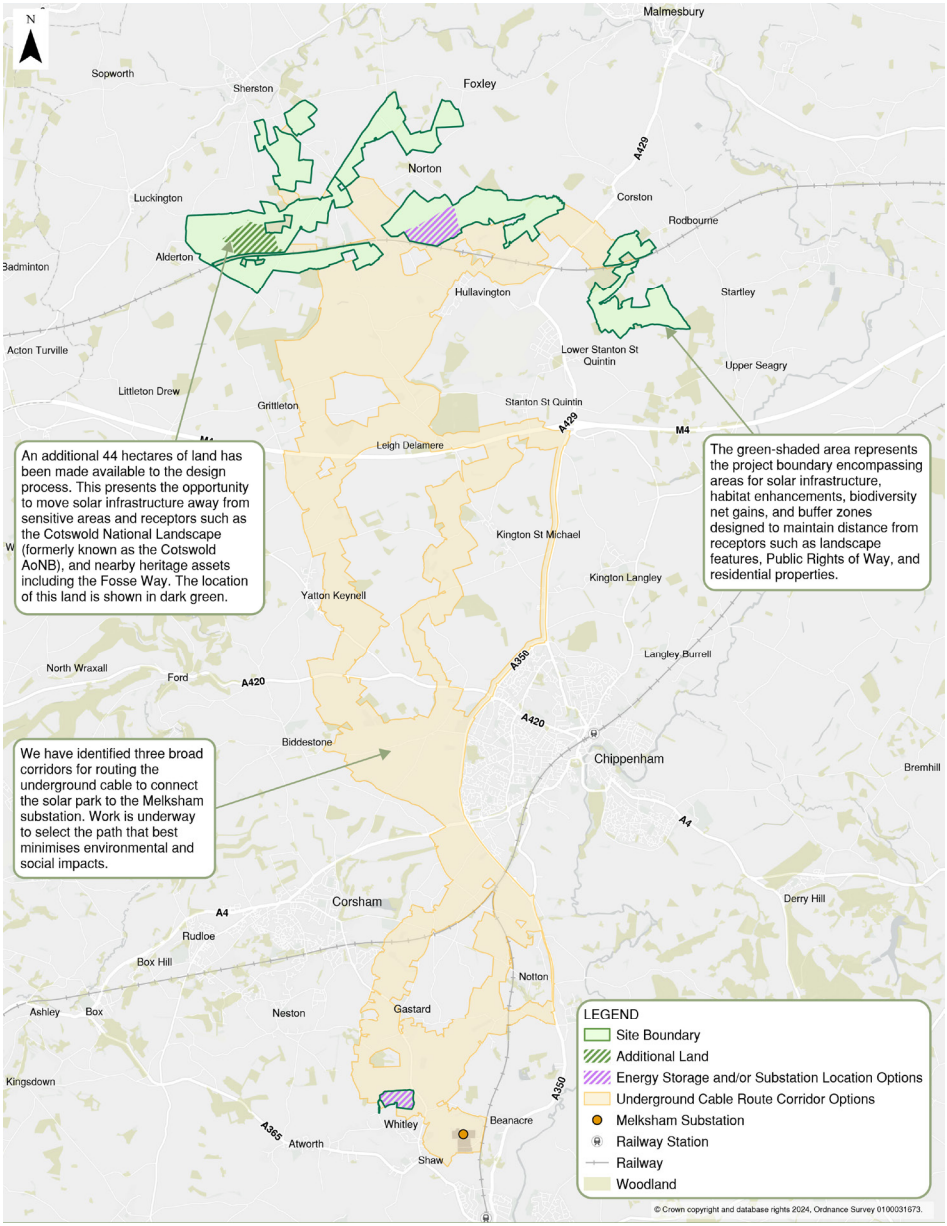
Further details of how we have taken into consideration non-statutory and statutory consultation feedback will be set out in the Consultation Report submitted as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application.

Indicative timeline



*Dates are indicative and could be subject to change.

Project Location Map - updated 16 July 2024



Contact us

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like to find out more information about Lime Down Solar Park.

You can get in touch with members of our stakeholder engagement team using any of the communication lines listed below.

info@limedownsolar.co.uk

Freephone 0808 175 6656
(open 09.00-17.00 Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays)

FREEPOST Lime Down Solar Park

www.limedownsolar.co.uk

Should you require any documents in large print or braille formats, please contact us using the details above.

2 Email Newsletter – 24 October 2024

Lime Down Solar Park Autumn Newsletter

You are receiving this newsletter as you registered your contact details with us to send you project updates straight to your inbox.

This newsletter announces the publication of our Consultation Summary Report and introduces our design principles which have been informing the design evolution over recent months. It also provides an update to answer questions we've received on net zero, the planning process, and project land obligations. Lastly, it outlines where we are now and what to expect over the coming months.

Lime Down Solar Park Consultation Summary Report is now available

Thank you to all those who participated in our Stage One consultation, which ran for six weeks, from 14 March 2024 to 26 April 2024.

Today we are publishing a report which includes a summary of the comments received and how we are using this feedback to inform the project design process moving forward.

We are grateful to have received a significant volume of feedback. Your views and comments have helped to improve our understanding of the local area and the aspects of Lime Down Solar Park that you consider important for us to prioritise as we develop our proposals.

The report is available to view and download on our website at www.limedownsolar.co.uk.

About the project

Lime Down Solar Park is anticipated as being able to deliver up to 500 megawatts (MW) of electricity – enough to power approximately 115,000 homes annually – and become a substantial source of renewable power for the country.

The proposals also include energy storage facilities, so that electricity can be deployed to the national gird when needed and underground cables to connect electricity generated by the project to the gird.

Hitting net zero targets

To achieve the UK's net zero and climate change targets, boosting our solar energy generation is essential and this is set out in the Labour government's manifesto pledge, [redacted]

We need a large amount of clean electricity in the system to help ensure energy security and combat climate change. Ground-mounted solar installation plays an important role, alongside alternative sources of renewable energy, to achieve the government's ambitious targets.

Solar panels currently take up [redacted] the current area occupied by solar PV will be required to meet the UK's energy needs. Whilst there is a need for more rooftop solar generation, the latest Energy Security Strategy continues

to recognise that ground-mounted solar has the capacity to contribute a much larger amount of electricity generation than rooftop technologies. It is unlikely the government can achieve its goal of [redacted] without the use of ground-mounted solar sites.

The independent [redacted] shows that solar farms do not present a risk to the UK's food security and agricultural land. The Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs has estimated that climate change could reduce the UK's stock of high-grade agricultural land by [redacted] According to the National Farmers Union (NFU), solar farms have a relatively modest land take and environmental impact compared to other forms of low-carbon energy production such as wind power, bioenergy and even other non-food land use such as golf courses, horse paddocks or pharmaceutical crops.

Lime Down Solar Park would generate low-carbon electricity, helping to address climate change, protecting the UK's land and improving long-term food security.

About the planning process

The development consenting regime for an NSIP comes under the Planning Act 2008. This means that we need to submit an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to build, operate and decommission Lime Down Solar Park to the Planning Inspectorate.

Once submitted, the Lime Down Solar Park DCO application would be examined by the Planning Inspectorate, the independent body responsible for

examining NSIPs. They in turn would make a recommendation on the project application to the Secretary of State for the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). The Secretary of State will then make the final decision on the DCO application.

Design principles

Our mission is to help the UK increase its solar energy usage, making more renewable energy possible whilst drastically reducing carbon emissions.

Based on the requirements of national and local planning policy, the specific characteristics and features of the site and the feedback received from the public at Stage One Consultation, we have developed a series of design principles to provide a framework for design development and to guide our work.

This allows us to maximise the outcomes and value that the project provides, deliver benefits to communities and control any adverse effects on the local environment throughout the lifecycle of the project - from construction through to operation, maintenance and decommissioning.

These design principles are as follows:

Landscape Led Design

The design of the project will be ‘Landscape Led’ exploring the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside.

Mitigation Hierarchy

Adherence to the mitigation hierarchy to reduce impacts and control any adverse effects on the environment throughout the lifecycle of the project from construction through to operation and maintenance and decommissioning.

Net Gain

The project will deliver a minimum 10% net gain for biodiversity through strategic habitat creation and enhancement measures across the Sites.

Flexibility, resilient resources, climate change

The project design will retain a degree of flexibility to enable it to adapt over time, be functional and fit for purpose, and respond to innovative and new technologies as well as building resilience to climate change.

Site layout design

The layout of the project will be carefully designed to minimise impacts where practicable to amenity from air quality, traffic and noise effects and safeguard the health and safety of local residents by securing suitable control measures during construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning of the project.

The water environment

The project will protect the water environment by adhering to good pollution control practice and be resilient from flooding both now and in the future and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

Heritage

The design of the project will be sensitive to above and below ground heritage assets and their setting, by locating infrastructure at a suitable distance and through appropriate landscape screening.

Land Use

The project will be sensitive to existing land uses where practicable and maximise opportunities to strengthen green and blue infrastructure.

Recreation and access

The project will seek to minimise the effects of the development on Public Rights of Way by incorporating measures to maintain and, where practicable, explore opportunities to improve the local footpath network.

We intend to consult on these design principles with project stakeholders and local communities at Stage Two Consultation and will produce a full overview of the principles as part of our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) in the New Year.

Project land obligations

At the initial stage of developing proposals for the Project, Lime Down Solar Park Ltd has entered into option agreements with landowners. These agreements put in place legally binding obligations to lease land that is being proposed for solar panels, substations, energy storage and other associated developments relating to the Project.

The option agreements ensure that the land will be available to lease subject to the Project being granted development consent. These agreements are industry standard and provide landowners with certainty and protection over the use of their land while securing development rights for Lime Down Solar Park. The option agreements give Lime Down Solar Park exclusive rights during both the option period and the lease term.

The agreements set out the duration of the option period when Lime Down Solar Park has sole discretion to decide whether to proceed with taking the lease including conditions under which the option can be exercised and the right to carry out surveys. As with any option agreement, landowners during the option period are restricted from entering into similar agreements or granting interests with other parties without Lime Down Solar Park's consent, and are legally obliged to comply with the terms set out in their agreements.

As a responsible developer, throughout the Project development process, our goal is to work collaboratively with landowners, their land agents and other representatives. Our aim is to ensure that all parties fully understand the legal process including the benefits and obligations from the legal terms and arrangements.

Where we are now

Alongside careful consideration of the feedback received during our first stage of consultation, we are preparing for this upcoming Stage Two consultation. Further information on this upcoming consultation can be found on our webpage linked here.

The indicative project timeline for Lime Down Solar Park has evolved following the close of the Stage One non-statutory consultation. Key changes include our Stage Two statutory consultation being held in early 2025, avoiding the holiday and New Year period. Our application submission is anticipated for late 2025. This timeline, updated in July 2024, is available on the project website and on page 21 of the Consultation Summary Report.

We will get back in touch with more details on how you can take part and what to expect soon. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch with our stakeholder engagement team using the communication lines listed below.

Frequently Asked Questions

Find out more about Lime Down Solar Park [redacted].

Communication Lines

- info@limedownsolar.co.uk
- Freephone - 0808 175 6656 (open 09.00-17.00 Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays)
- FREEPOST Lime Down Solar Park

3 Postal Newsletter – 24 October 2024

«AddressBlock»

24 October 2024

«GreetingLine»

Project update: Lime Down Solar Park Autumn Newsletter

You are receiving this newsletter as you registered your contact details with us to send you project updates by post.

This newsletter announces the publication of our Consultation Summary Report and introduces our design principles, which have been informing the design evolution over recent months. It also provides an update to answer questions we've received on net zero, the planning process, project land obligations and underground cable route. Lastly, it outlines where we are now and what to expect over the coming months.

Lime Down Solar Park Consultation Summary Report is now available

Thank you to all those who participated in our Stage One consultation, which ran for six weeks, from 14 March 2024 to 26 April 2024.

On Thursday 24 October 2024, we published a report which includes a summary of the comments received and how we are using this feedback to inform the project design process moving forward.

We are grateful to have received a significant volume of feedback. Your views and comments have helped to improve our understanding of the local area and the aspects of Lime Down Solar Park that you consider important for us to prioritise as we develop our proposals.

The report is available to view and download on our website at www.limedownsolar.co.uk.

About the project

Lime Down Solar Park is anticipated as being able to deliver up to 500 megawatts (MW) of electricity – enough to power approximately 115,000 homes annually – and become a substantial source of renewable power for the country.

The proposals also include energy storage facilities, so that electricity can be deployed to the national grid when needed, and underground cables to connect electricity generated by the project to the grid.

Hitting net zero targets

To achieve the UK's net zero and climate change targets, boosting our solar energy generation is essential and this is set out in the Labour Government's manifesto pledge, “Make Britain a clean energy superpower” (2024).[1]

We need a large amount of clean electricity in the system to help ensure energy security and combat climate change. Ground-mounted solar installation plays an important role, alongside alternative sources of renewable energy, to achieve the Government's ambitious targets.

Solar panels currently take up 0.1% of the UK’s land, and the UK Government forecasts that between five and seven times the current area occupied by solar PV will be required to meet the UK’s energy needs.[2] Whilst there is a need for more rooftop solar generation, the latest Energy Security Strategy continues to recognise that ground-mounted solar has the capacity to contribute a much larger amount of electricity generation than rooftop technologies. It is unlikely the government can achieve its goal of 50GW by 2030 without the use of ground-mounted solar sites.[3]

The independent National Food Strategy Review shows that solar farms do not present a risk to the UK's food security and agricultural land.[4] The Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs has estimated that climate change could reduce the UK’s stock of high-grade agricultural land by three quarters by 2050.[5] According to the National Farmers Union (NFU), solar farms have a relatively modest land take and environmental impact compared to other forms of low-carbon energy production such as wind power, bioenergy and even other non-food land use such as golf courses, horse paddocks or pharmaceutical crops.

Lime Down Solar Park would generate low-carbon electricity, helping to address climate change, protecting the UK’s land and improving long-term food security.

About the planning process

The development consenting regime for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) comes under the Planning Act 2008. This means that we need to submit an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to build, operate and decommission Lime Down Solar Park to the Planning Inspectorate.

Once submitted, the Lime Down Solar Park DCO application would be examined by the Planning Inspectorate, the independent body responsible for examining NSIPs. They in turn would make a recommendation on the project application to the Secretary of State for the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). The Secretary of State will then make the final decision on the DCO application.

Design principles

[redacted]

Lime Down
Solar Park

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The project will seek to minimise the effects of the development on Public Rights of Way by incorporating measures to maintain and, where practicable, explore opportunities to improve the local footpath network.

We intend to consult on these design principles with project stakeholders and local communities at Stage Two Consultation and will produce a full overview of the principles as part of our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) in the New Year.

Project land obligations

At the initial stage of developing proposals for the Project, Lime Down Solar Park Ltd has entered into option agreements with landowners. These agreements put in place legally binding obligations to lease land that is being proposed for solar panels, substations, energy storage and other associated developments relating to the Project.

The option agreements ensure that the land will be available to lease subject to the Project being granted development consent. These agreements are industry standard and provide landowners with certainty and protection over the use of their land while securing development rights for Lime Down Solar Park. The option agreements give Lime Down Solar Park exclusive rights during both the option period and the lease term.

The agreements set out the duration of the option period when Lime Down Solar Park has sole discretion to decide whether to proceed with taking the lease including conditions under which the option can be exercised and the right to carry out surveys. As with any option agreement, landowners during the option period are restricted from entering into similar agreements or granting interests with other parties without Lime Down Solar Park's consent, and are legally obliged to comply with the terms set out in their agreements.

As a responsible developer, throughout the Project development process, our goal is to work collaboratively with landowners, their land agents and other representatives. Our aim is to ensure that all parties fully understand the legal process including the benefits and obligations from the legal terms and arrangements.

Project Cable Route

We are continuing to refine the cable route corridor after the initial scoping submission, which connects to the National Grid transmission network at Melksham Grid Supply Point. We can confirm that no pylons or overhead lines will be included in our application, as all proposed routes are based on underground cabling methods.

To ensure that we explore every potential option, we are assessing more land than may ultimately be required. This is standard practice under the Rochdale Envelope approach, which allows for flexibility during the planning process. It ensures that all possibilities are considered before final decisions are made.

Where we are now

Alongside careful consideration of the feedback received during our first stage of consultation, we are preparing for this upcoming Stage Two consultation. Further information on this upcoming consultation can be found on our webpage linked here.

The indicative project timeline for Lime Down Solar Park has evolved following the close of the Stage One non-statutory consultation. Key changes include our Stage Two statutory consultation being held in early 2025, avoiding the holiday and New Year period. Our application submission is anticipated for late 2025. This timeline, updated in July 2024, is available on the project website and on page 21 of the Consultation Summary Report.

We will get back in touch with more details on how you can take part and what to expect soon. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch with our stakeholder engagement team using the communication lines listed below.

Communication Lines

- info@limedownsolar.co.uk
- Freephone - 0808 175 6656 (open 09.00-17.00 Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays)
- FREEPOST Lime Down Solar Park
- www.limedownsolar.co.uk

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Will Threlfall
Senior Project Development Manager
Lime Down Solar Park

4 Press Release – 25 October 2024

PRESS RELEASE

Date: 25 October 2024

Island Green Power publishes summary of first stage community consultation into Lime Down Solar Park

Island Green Power, the developer putting forward proposals for Lime Down Solar Park, has published findings from the stage one community consultation. The report outlines the key themes from feedback received on the proposed project and explains how this, with the outcome of environmental assessments, will be used to develop and refine design proposals.

During the Stage One community consultation, Lime Down Solar Park received:

- 752 completed paper and online feedback forms;
- 539 emails;
- 35 letters; and
- 334 people registered to receive project updates.

Key themes that were raised in the feedback received on the project design proposals included:

- Landscape and visual;
- Soils and agriculture;
- Ecology and biodiversity;
- Hydrology, flood risk and drainage;
- Cultural heritage;
- Transport and access;
- Battery safety.

Will Threlfall, Senior Project Development Manager for Lime Down Solar Park, commented:

"*We would like to thank everyone who has given their time and feedback to the Lime Down Solar Park team during our stage one consultation. It has been invaluable to hear directly from the local community on our proposals including what must be prioritised in our designs. We now have a better understanding of what is important from a landscape, nature, and community perspective that will be addressed as we refine our plans.*

Consultation is critical to our design process and, going forward, we will continue to listen to the local community, stakeholders, and key organisations as we develop proposals for Lime Down Solar Park."

Following this first stage of public consultation, a second, statutory stage will take place in early 2025 ('Stage Two'). This will provide the local community and interested parties with the opportunity to share their feedback on further developed proposals for the Lime Down Solar Park.

Stage Two will seek feedback on updated designs, including proposed adjustments to the proposed equipment locations and the route of the underground cable connection between the solar and battery areas to Melksham substation, and additional measures to mitigate the impacts associated with the project during construction and operation.

For a full copy of the Lime Down Solar Park Consultation Summary Report, visit https://www.limedownsolar.co.uk/documents

To find out more about the project or register for updates on Lime Down Solar Park, email info@limedownsolar.co.uk, write to FREEPOST Lime Down Solar, or call 0808 175 6656.

END

For all media enquiries please contact:

- Beth Motley (Counter Context) /[redacted]
- Angelika Solomons-Tibi (Counter Context) /[redacted]

Notes to editors

Project Information

- More Information on Lime Down Solar Park is available via: www.limedownsolar.co.uk
- Lime Down Solar Park is anticipated as being able to generate up to 500MW of electricity. Since its generation capacity exceeds 50MW, the project is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)
- The development consenting regime for an NSIP comes under the Planning Act 2008. This means that the developer, Island Green Power, must submit an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to build, operate and decommission Lime Down Solar Park to the Planning Inspectorate rather than the local planning authority.
- In the case of energy related NSIPs, the Planning Inspectorate acts on behalf of the Secretary of State for Energy and Net Zero. The Planning Inspectorate will carry out an

examination of the application and then make a final recommendation to the Secretary of State on whether to grant consent. The Secretary of State will make the final decision on whether to grant consent for Lime Down Solar Park.

- Island Green Power expect the development process, including DCO submission and examination, to span two to three years. The aim is to submit the application for development consent to the Planning Inspectorate in late 2025. Subject to obtaining consent, the earliest that construction would start is 2027.
- While the DCO application will not be submitted to the local planning authority, Wiltshire Council and stakeholder groups will play a key role in the planning process and will be extensively consulted as the project progresses.
- For more information about the application process for NSIP Projects on the Planning Inspectorate website, please visit the PINS webpage linked here.

About Island Green Power

Established in 2013, Island Green Power (IGP) is a leading developer of renewable energy projects, with a focus on utility-scale solar farms and battery storage systems. Their mission is to help the UK increase our solar energy generation, making more renewable energy possible whilst drastically reducing our carbon emissions.

IGP is committed to responsible land use and believe that the development and delivery of solar farms and battery storage systems can be achieved in harmony with their environment. Directly engaging with residents, landowners, businesses, and members of the community remains key to a successful development process.

For additional information about IGP please visit [redacted]